

Message Text

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ACTION SY-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ADP-00 FBO-01 INR-10 INRE-00 SSO-00

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O 240950 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9026

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 5932

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABLD, ASEC, AFSP, PFOR, UR

SUBJ: REPAIRS TO CHANCERY FACADE

REF: STATE 092613; MOSCOW 5607 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY. UPDK DIRECTOR AMBASSADOR IVANOV HAS REPLIED TO CHARGE' S MAY 17 LETTER (SEE REFTEL) IN A POSITIVELY-WORDED LETTER WHICH, HOWEVER, ENVISAGES SOVIET CONSTRUCTION OF ENTIRE SCAFFOLDING ON ALL SECTIONS OF BUILDING. WITH THIS SOLE EXCEPTION, UPDK DIRECTOR' S REPLY APPEARS TO SATISFY ALL REQUIREMENTS OF US SIDE. ACTUAL SOVIET REPAIR WORK ON NORTH WING COMMENCED MAY 22. EMBASSY COMMENTS AND DRAFT REPLY TO UPDK SUBMITTED HEREWITH.

2. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS DEPARTMENT' S GUIDANCE INCLUDING APPROVAL OF OR SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT REPLY TO UPDK AS WELL AS RECOMMENDATIONS ON TIMING OF THAT REPLY.

3. TEXT OF IVANOV LETTER, DATED MAY 22 BUT RECEIVED IN EMBASSY MAY 23, FOLLOWS (UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION): QUOTE. DEAR MR. A. DUBS: ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER OF MAY 17, 1973 ON THE REPAIR OF THE FACADE OF THE BUILDING OF THE EMBASSY OF THE USA AT U1. CHAIKOVSKOGO 19-23, I INFORM YOU OF THE FOLLOWING:
TAKING CARE FOR THE PROPER MAINTENANCE OF THE BUILDING,
THE ADMINISTRATION FOR SERVICE TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS
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HAS CONSIDERED IT POSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL OF THE EMBASSY, SET FORTH IN THE LETTER OF ITS COUNSELOR, MR. ROGER A. PROVENCHER, OF APRIL 25, 1973, AND ALSO TO COMPLY WITH THE FURTHER REQUEST, TRANSMITTED BY SECOND SECRETARY OF EMBASSY, MR. THOMPSON, ON MAY 7, 1973 IN A CONVERSATION AT UPDK, CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS OF JOINT EFFORTS TO REPAIR THE ABOVE- MENTIONED BUILDING. IN CONFORMITY WITH THE DESIRES OF THE EMBASSY, THE ERECTION OF THE METAL SCAFFOLDING FROM THE FIRST THROUGH THE TENTH FLOORS, NECESSARY FOR THE REPAIR OF THE FACADE OF THE ENTIRE BUILDING, AND ALSO THE REPAIR WORK FROM THE FIRST TO THE SEVENTH FLOOR, WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY THE RESOURCES OF SOVIET REPAIR- CONSTRUCTION ORGANIZATIONS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL EXERCISE ITS RIGHT OF SUPERVISION OF THE COURSE OF THE WORK WHICH WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY THE AMERICAN LABORERS, AND ITS RIGHT OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMPLETED WORK UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE REPAIR.

IT IS PLANNED TO CARRY OUT THE REPAIR WORK FROM THE NORTH WING CONSECUTIVELY AROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE BUILDING. IT IS FORESEEN THAT THE EMBASSY WILL INSURE THE FASTENING OF PROJECTING METAL BEAMS ON THE ROOFS OF THE NORTH, CENTRAL AND SOUTH WINGS OF THE BUILDING, WHICH WILL BE USED FOR RAISING SCAFFOLDING AND BUILDING MATERIALS. THE STABILITY OF THE FASTENING OF THE BEAMS MUST BE TESTED AND ACCEPTED BY THE CONSTRUCTION ORGANIZATIONS CARRYING OUT THE REPAIR WORK. WITH SINCERE RESPECT, V. IVANOV UNQUOTE.

4. TEXTS OF CHARGE'S LETTER OF MAY 22 AND OF PROVENCHER LETTER OF APRIL 25 WERE REPORTED IN REFTEL. THOMPSON "REQUEST" OF MAY 7, REPORTED IN MOSCOW 5135, WAS, OF COURSE, NOT A REQUEST AT ALL, BUT A CONCESSION TO PREFERRED SOVIET POSITION ON ERECTION OF SCAFFOLDING, AS AUTHORIZED BY DEPARTMENT IN STATE 081472 AND CONFIRMED BY STATE 084267.

5. WITH REGARD TO PROJECTING METAL BEAMS (METALLICHESKIYE KONSOLI) MENTIONED IN FINAL PARAGRAPH OF IVANOV LETTER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ONE SUCH CANTILEVER HAS BEEN ERECTED ON ROOF OF NORTH WING IN CONNECTION WITH ERECTION OF SCAFFOLDING AND REPAIR WORK ALREADY IN PROGRESS. BOTH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE BEAM ITSELF AND THE MANNER OF ITS FASTENING -- IT HAS SIMPLY BEEN TIGHTLY LASHED IN PLACE -- HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY EXAMINED BY EMBASSY EXPERTS, AND APPEAR TO PRESENT NO SECURITY PROBLEMS.

6. A CREW OF SOVIET WORKERS -- MOSTLY WOMEN -- BEGAN ACTUAL

REPAIRS TO WEST AND NORTH FACADES OF NORTH WING ON MAY
22, AND HAVE BEEN CONTINUING THESE OPERATIONS SINCE UNDER
THE CLOSE SUPERVISION OF SEABEES.

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9027

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 5932

7. EMBASSY SUBMITS FOLLOWING DRAFT REPLY TO IVANOV LETTER
FOR CONSIDERATION BY DEPT.: QUOTE: DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR:
I ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER OF MAY 22, 1973,
AND AM EXTREMELY PLEASED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION FOR
SERVICE TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HAS FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO
AGREE TO A JOINT UNDERTAKING OF THE REPAIR OF THE
AMERICAN EMBASSY BUILDING, WHICH WILL PREVENT FURTHER
DETERIORATION THE THE BUILDING AND POSSIBLE RESULTING
INJURY OR LOSS OF LIFE.
I WISH TO CLARIFY, HOWEVER, THAT, AS STATED IN MY LETTER
OF MAY 17, 1973, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL
FOR THE JOINT REPAIR OF THE BUILDING IS CONVEYED IN FULL
BY THE LETTER OF COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY ROGER A. PROVENCHER
DATED APRIL 25, 1973. IN PARTICULAR, THAT LETTER PRO-
POSED THAT ALL WORK ABOVE THE SIXTH FLOOR OF THE CENTRAL
WING, INCLUDING THE ERECTION OF SCAFFOLDING, WILL BE
ACCOMPLISHED BY AMERICAN WORKMEN USING SOVIET MATERIALS

SUPPLIED THROUGH UPDK, AND THAT A SOVIET ENGINEER,
ACCOMPANIED BY ESCORTS, WILL BE PERMITTED TO INSPECT THE
INSTALLATION AND ANCHORING OF THE SCAFFOLDING ON THE
FACADE OF THE CENTRAL WING.

I TRUST THAT THIS PROVISION, WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT FULL
RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY INJURY TO ITS WORKMEN DURING
THE USE OF THE PORTION OF THE SCAFFOLDING ERECTED BY
THEM, WILL NOT CAUSE THE ADMINISTRATION ANY DIFFICULTY.

SINCERELY, ADOLPH DUBS. UNQUOTE.

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8. INSPECTION MENTIONED IN SECOND PARAGRAPH OF DRAFT IS THAT REFERRED TO IN PARA. 4. C. OF MOSCOW 4283 WHICH WAS SPECIFICALLY APPROVED BY PARA. 1 OF STATE 073497 AND AGAIN IN PARA. 3 OF STATE 092613. IT WAS PROPOSED TO UPDK IN PROVENCHER LETTER OF APRIL 25 AND CONFIRMED IN CHARGE' S LETTER OF MAY 17, BOTH REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT IN MOSCOW 5607. EMBASSY THEREFORE ASSUMES THAT SUCH INSPECTION, UNDER CLOSE SUPERVISION OF AMERICAN EXPERTS, FALLS IN A DIFFERENT CATEGORY THAN THE SOVIET ACCESS FOR PURPOSES OF SCAFFOLDING ERECTION OR REPAIR WHICH ARE TO BE PRECLUDED ABOVE THE SIXTH FLOOR OF THE CENTRAL WING OF BUILDING.

9. FINAL PARAGRAPH OF DRAFT LETTER IS INTENDED TO DEFUSE EXPECTED SOVIET ARGUMENT, ALREADY PRESENTED ON FREQUENT PAST OCCASIONS , THAT SOVIET SIDE CANNOT AGREE TO ERECTION OF ANY PORTION OF SCAFFOLDING BY AMERICAN SIDE BECAUSE OF CONSIDERATIONS OF SAFETY AND LIABILITY IN THE EVENT OF COLLAPSE. SINCE, IN THE EVENT OF SOVIET NON-COOPERATION, THE USG WOULD CLEARLY HAVE TO ACCEPT ALL CONSEQUENCES FOR POSSIBLE ACCIDENTS DURING ITS UNILATERAL REPAIR EFFORTS, SUCH A RELEASE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE AN UNREASONABLE PRICE TO PAY TO ENCOURAGE SOVIET COOPERATION.

10. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT POSITIVELY- WORDED REPLY BY IVANOV, WITH LOW- KEY ATTEMPT TO CAPITALIZE ON USG OFFER MADE AT MAY 7 MEETING, IS THE MOST FAVORABLE REPLY THAT COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED AT THIS POINT. WORDING OF REPLY LEAVES CONSIDERABLE ROOM FOR BACKING- OFF. WHILE ANY USG REPLY SUCH AS DRAFT SUBMITTED ABOVE COULD BE EXPECTED, UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS, TO EVOKE ONLY VIOLENT SOVIET REACTION, IT IS JUST CONCEIVABLE THAT, ON THE EVE OF THE JUNE SUMMIT, THE SOVIET SIDE MAY AGREE ON THESE TERMS.

11. TIMING OF REPLY. IT IS NOTED THAT UPDK TOOK FOUR WEEKS TO REPLY TO USG PROPOSAL CONTAINED IN PROVENCHER LETTER OF APRIL 25. SINCE REPAIRS OF NORTH WING ARE CURRENTLY PROCEEDING, IF EMBASSY' S REPLY TO IVANOV WERE TO BE DELAYED FOR A SIMILAR PERIOD, REPAIRS TO NORTH WING
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WOULD BE NEAR COMPLETION, AND SOVIET SIDE POSSIBLY EVEN LESS WILLING TO ABANDON ENTIRE PROJECT. REQUEST DEPARTMENT

GUIDANCE ON TIMING OF REPLY IN LIGHT OF THIS CONSIDERATION.
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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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